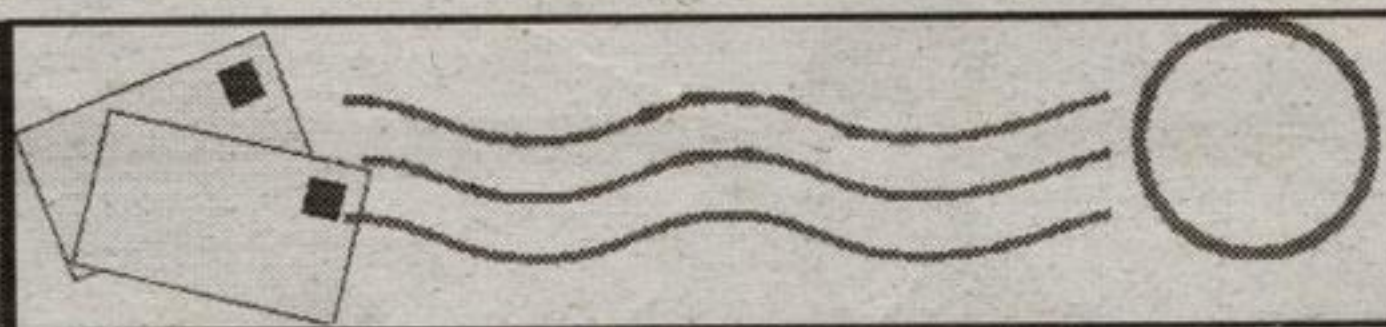


Letters



Wallace deserves apology from Tanner, pageant committee

Dear Acton Tanner:

I am appalled at how the Acton Tanner has belittled a young girl by whitening out her face. This is a disrespectful, unprofessional and childish thing to do and I think that Rachael

Wallace deserves an apology. This little misunderstanding has been blown right out of proportion and words such as "Investigation" are unnecessary. This is not a crime! It is only a young teen who made a mistake. The numerous phone calls made to Rachel's house were uncalled for and in my opinion were harassment. The pageant committee said that this incident has tarnished the pageant, which is not correct. In fact it is the committee who has poorly dealt with this matter that has ruined the pageant and I am sure discouraged many other applicants from trying out. No one deserves to

be treated in such an undignified manner and humiliated in front of the entire community. If this young girl was good enough to win, and that's what the final decision was, then the pageant committee should not go back on the Judge's decision. If they were so worried about where the girls were from, then it should be their responsibility to find out before the participants take their time, effort, and courage to participate.

Sydney Dawe

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Columnist ignored the facts

Dear Editor:

I may be mistaken, but I was under the impression that journalists had an obligation to ensure that their facts were correct before writing their articles. This does not seem to apply to Angela Tyler's editorials at The New Tanner. Apparently even when she has the correct information she is not required to print it. Her editorials surrounding the Miss Acton pageant are evidence of this statement.

There has been a lot of question regarding what happened at this year's pageant, but for the moment, let's suspend that discussion. When the first article appeared I contacted Ms Tyler to voice my concerns for misinformation that had occurred. Specifically regarding the fact that she had referred to the Miss Acton competition as a beauty pageant. I explained that this was a misconception on her part, to which she responded that she knew it wasn't a beauty pageant, but that was the public perception. I also explained to her that the newly crowned winners were encouraged not to talk to reporters without a committee member present to ensure that they were not misquoted or overwhelmed by questions. One of the main purposes for having the competition is to provide young women the opportunity to develop their public speaking skills in a protected environment. These young women have

little to no experience dealing with the media and their knowledge of the pageant and agricultural society is limited. By having a committee member present during interviews on the weekend of the Fall Fair, which is the only time it happens, allows the winners to begin to develop these skills. I was told that if I had a problem that I should write a letter to the editor. I chose not to write a letter at that point for several reasons, the most important of which was that there were not any critical mistakes.

After the second editorial I find that there are too many mistakes that are now critical. Ms Tyler used incorrect information when trying to assign blame for this "scandal" to the Miss Acton committee. The application form that she referred to numerous times does not exist. The contestants fill out information sheets at the Thursday night rehearsal, not application forms. These sheets are used to provide the background information that is read during the first stage appearance at the pageant. There is no address or telephone information contained in these sheets. The documentation that she refers to as pertinent and the destruction of which "appears as an almost cover-up" are in actuality the judging and tally sheets that are used to determine the winners. It consists of the numbers that are assigned to each contestant by each judge for each judging. This information is destroyed, after the addition is verified for a third time, at the end of the pageant for the simple reason that it is no longer necessary. There was no information contained in these sheets that could have been used to prove or disprove Rachel

Wallace's claim to have an Acton Address.

One final correction, the businesses of Acton generously support this competition to the amount of several thousand dollars in gifts and prizes instead of the hundreds of dollars that Ms. Tyler stated.

Now to deal with the pageant and the "scandal." As Ms Tyler correctly stated, the criteria for entering the pageant appears in the Fair Book and all the advertising. These criteria are repeated to any contestant that signs up prior to the rehearsal. At the Thursday night rehearsal the criteria is repeated again, I was at the rehearsal and heard this done. I was also present at the brunch on Saturday morning when Kelly White asked the new Miss Acton twice if she had an Acton address, to which Ms Wallace responded that she did. Each of the winners was asked to provide their full address and telephone number, which has to be given to the Fair Board, Ms Wallace wrote down an Acton address and postal code.

What could the organizers of the pageant have done to prevent this from happening? They could have required each of the contestants to provide an address and telephone number at the Thursday night rehearsal, and then followed up on this. Instead they have chosen to believe that these young women were being truthful, clearly after 40 years that policy is now going to have to be re-thought, which the organizers have already started to discuss. It is important to remember that when this whole situation was brought to the attention of the organizers they immediately investigated this claim. When it was proven to be true, action was taken quickly. What more would any of us have done, particularly when you take into consideration that this isn't the Miss Canada or Miss America pageant and is completely voluntary.

I understand that I may not be the most objective person to speak on this issue, but the fact that I have worked very closely with all the current organizers allows me some background information that others don't have. I know the information that they give to the contestants. I also know how

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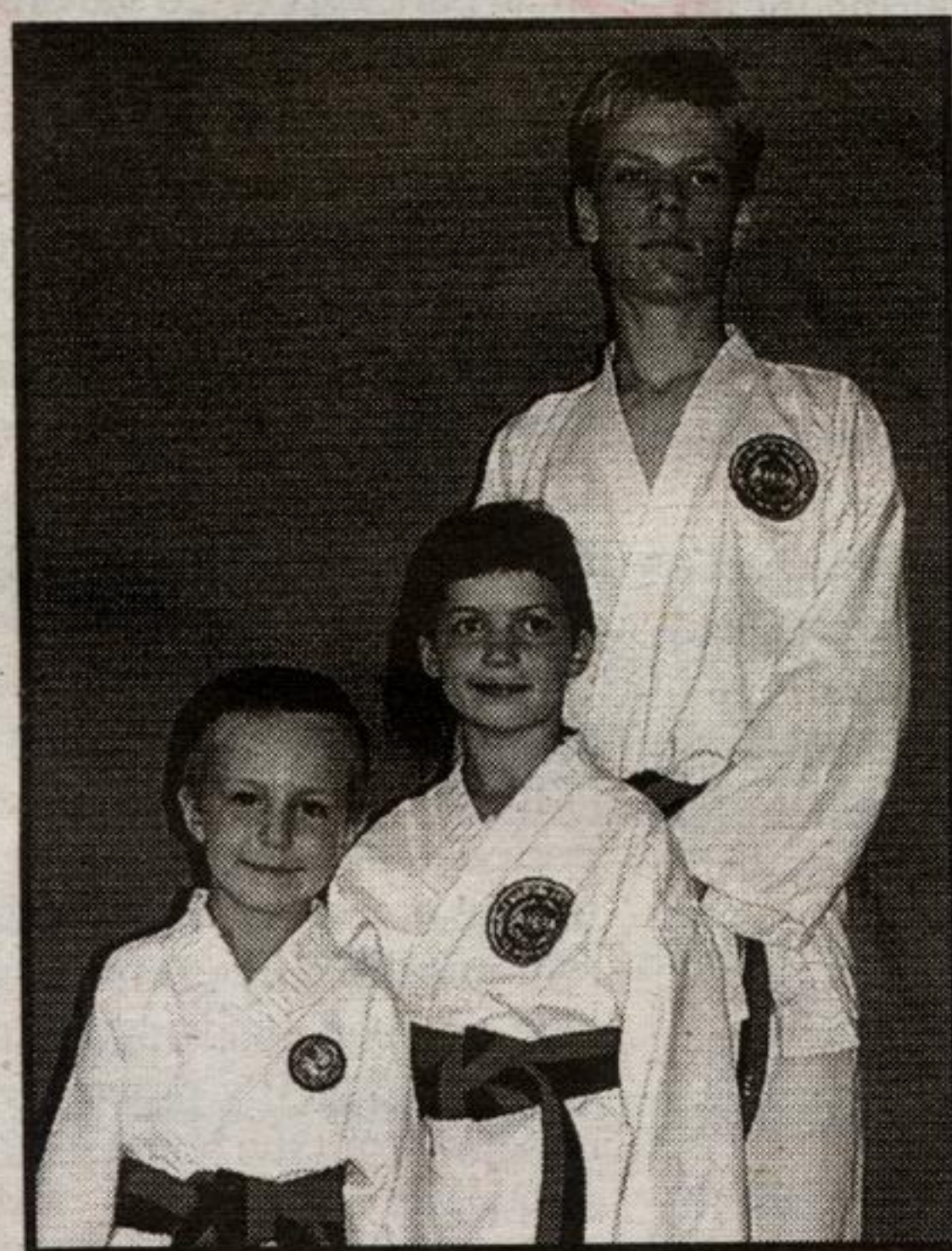
Butt-out Halton

Tomorrow Halton Regional Chairman Savoline will present two Halton residents with smoke-free survival kits and wish them luck in the Quit Smoking 2002 contest.

Smokers who quit the habit for one full month (Oct 15-Nov 15) are eligible to win various prizes. Over the last two years more than 800 smokers in Halton have participated in the contest.

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